Dear Ms Warren,

Thank you for your further request of 3 May 2015 about the report *Dietary Reference Values for Food Energy and Nutrients for the United Kingdom* under the Freedom of Information Act (2000). Your exact request was:

“I refer to an earlier Freedom of Information Request regarding the above publication which you have told me is not in electronic format but which I can purchase if I choose to do so. The report may be publically available but I would apparently need to purchase it for £22.50 even if I only want to read a short selection of pages.

However, since I do not have sight of the contents page, I am not sure that the publication contains the information which I am seeking so it would be counter-intuitive to spend money purchasing it if the information is not in the report.

An examination of the web-page which lists SACN reports (SACN having superseded COMA) reveals that SACN has not updated COMA’s work relating to the Upper Limit (UL) of fluoride recommended for infants. It is therefore probable that the original opinion by COMA is still current.

Would you please refer to the original COMA publication (Report No. 41) and let me have the following information:

1. Page Number range, Section No. and Chapter No. of the part of the report which deals with fluoride in relation to infants, toddlers and the young child.

2. Please confirm that the information on these pages is current and has not been superseded.

3. Please confirm that COMA decided that an UL of 0.22mgF/kilo body weight per day for an infant was considered to be a safe upper limit.
4. Please provide relevant information regarding COMA’s reasonings relating to the UL of fluoride which COMA considered to be safe for infants.

*It would be preferable if you could provide me with a scan of the relevant pages but if you cannot do so, then please let me have the information requested in 1-4.*

I can confirm that the Department holds some information relevant to your request.

Copies of the pages on fluoride from *Dietary Reference Values for Food Energy and Nutrients for the United Kingdom* are attached to this reply.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) advises on safe upper levels of vitamins and minerals and seeks advice from the Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT). The relevant COT statement which supersedes the COMA view is available at the following website:


There is a European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) opinion from 2013 concerning dietary reference values, which is adequate intake rather than safe upper level. It refers to a Tolerable Upper Intake Level (the equivalent of a safe upper level) for fluoride for children up to the age of eight years being set by EFSA (2005). However, the FSA do not consider that this supersedes the COT view.

If you require further information about recommended upper limits for fluoride, please contact the FSA directly:

Address: Food Standards Agency (UK Headquarters), Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH
Telephone: 020 7276 8829
Email: helpline@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk
Website: http://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/data-and-policies/foia

If you have any queries about this email, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to:

Head of the Freedom of Information Team
Department of Health
If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Department. The ICO can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Graham Sale

Freedom of Information Officer
Department of Health

FreedomofInformation@dh.gsi.gov.uk